



TO YOUR HEALTH

WELCOA'S ONLINE GENERAL WELLNESS BULLETIN



EAT RIGHT, PREVENT MUSCLE LOSS!

Maintaining muscle mass is paramount for weight control, metabolic health and overall well-being and quality of life. After all, if you have sufficient muscle mass, you can perform everyday activities like carrying in groceries, picking up loads of laundry, and even just walking with more ease.

As we age, however, we begin to lose muscle mass. In fact, people who are physically inactive can lose as much as three to five percent of their muscle mass per decade after age 30. To be sure, staying physically active and incorporating strength-training (like yoga, Pilates, free weights and weight machines) is the most powerful of all muscle-preserving strategies. You should strive for two 15-20 minute sessions of resistance training a week. But, building and maintaining muscle mass doesn't end with just physical activity. What you eat plays a big role too.

The International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) reviewed several worldwide studies to identify the most effective nutritional avenues for preventing loss of muscle

mass. Their scientific review identified the following key strategies:

GET GOOD PROTEIN AT EVERY MEAL. As we age, it takes higher doses of protein to stimulate muscle protein synthesis. Unfortunately, most people eat less, not more protein as they age. The ideal intake of daily protein based on the IOF's evaluation was 1 to 1.2 grams/kilogram of body weight a day. In other words, if you weighed 150 pounds you would need 75 grams of protein a day. Aim for a lean protein at every meal—for example, Greek yogurt for breakfast, turkey or chicken for lunch and salmon with lentils for dinner.

BE MINDFUL OF YOUR VITAMIN D INTAKE. Vitamin D plays a pivotal role in preservation of muscle mass and muscle function, yet most adults don't hit the daily recommendation of this critical vitamin. To ensure adequate intakes, get regular, safe sun exposure (spend 15-20 minutes outside with sunscreen on), consume vitamin D rich foods regularly (fortified dairy products,



eggs and oily fish) and consider taking a daily vitamin D supplement. Talk to your healthcare provider for their recommendation.

EAT AN ALKALINE-BASED DIET NOT, AN ACID-BASED DIET. Diets rich in meats, sweets and processed grains and carbohydrates are heavily acidic and thus give rise to acidic metabolic by-products. If you eat an abundance of these foods, it's hard to build and maintain muscle. On the other hand, making fruits and veggies a pivotal part of your daily diet provides an alkalizing effect in the body, which paves the way for healthy muscle mass. For best results, consume an abundance of fruits and veggies while restricting meats, sweets and processed foods.

There is growing evidence that vitamin B12 and folic acid are also important for improving muscle mass and strength. If you are age 50 or older, ask your healthcare provider if they recommend a supplement.

